

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about [Resolution A028](#) Issued by the Deputies on the Task Force on Church Leadership and Compensation 2015-2018

What does the president of the House of Deputies do in between General Conventions?

The president of the House of Deputies has three primary responsibilities, two of which take place between General Conventions. In addition to presiding over the House of Deputies while it is in session, the president serves as a vice president of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (DFMS), which is the corporation through which the Episcopal Church does business, and as vice chair of Executive Council, which governs the Episcopal Church between General Convention. The president of the House of Deputies is the only unpaid officer of the DFMS.

The governing documents of the church define the scope and responsibilities of these three roles. In its [report to General Convention](#), the Task Force on Leadership and Compensation provides detailed citations from the Constitution and Canons and other documents that formally define the president's responsibilities.

In addition to the responsibilities outlined in the governing documents, the president is often asked to speak at church gatherings like diocesan conventions, annual conferences of church organizations, educational events, and other gatherings, and to contribute book chapters, meditations, articles and other material to publications and online productions.

Has the job changed in recent years?

Before 1964, the president was elected at the beginning of General Convention to serve for that convention only. In 1964, General Convention amended the canons, directing that the president be elected during General Convention and take office, or begin a new three-year term, immediately upon adjournment. In 1967, General Convention made major changes in the president's canonical roles and responsibilities, including making the president the vice chair of Executive Council and thereby also a vice president of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, defining the authority of the president in making appointments and setting a term limit of three three-year terms.

What are the most compelling reasons to pay the president of the House of Deputies?

When General Convention expanded the duties of the president's role 50 years ago, it became impossible to fulfill the role and hold a full-time job. All House of Deputies presidents since John Coburn's tenure ended in 1976 have either been retired or had access to independent financial means.

The House of Deputies has, in recent years, been younger and more racially diverse than the Episcopal Church as a whole. But as long as the president's role remains a volunteer position, many—perhaps most—of those deputies are unable to consider serving as president, and both the House of Deputies and the wider church are deprived of the full benefit of their gifts and perspectives.

How much time does it take to be the president of the House of Deputies?

President Gay Jennings told the Living Church in May that she approaches the presidency as a full-time job. She estimates that she spends about 75 percent of her time fulfilling her canonical duties and the remaining 25 percent fulfilling requests from around the church.

Her canonical duties are enumerated in a nine-page appendix to the report of the Task Force to Study Church Leadership and Compensation that begins on page 902 of the Virtual Binder. These include her responsibilities as president of the House of Deputies, vice-chair of Executive Council and vice-president of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society. In addition to working from her home office, President Jennings routinely travels to the church's headquarters in New York City at least once a month and to the thrice-yearly meetings of Executive Council. She frequently meets with the Presiding Bishop and other

officers of the corporation at locations around the church, often in conjunction with other meetings and conferences.

President Jennings is a frequent speaker at diocesan conventions, church-affiliated organization gatherings, and other public events. For example, she was the keynote speaker at the Association of Episcopal Deacons gathering earlier this year, and during her term she has accepted invitations from bishops to address diocesan conventions in places as diverse as the Diocese of Delaware and Northwest Texas. She has traveled, by invitation, to Niobrara, to the Episcopal Church Asiamerica Ministries gathering, the Union of Black Episcopalians, the All Michigan Episcopal Network (AMEN), the Conference of Diocesan Executives, the All Our Children Conference and many other events.

If the president of the House of Deputies were paid, who would she or he report to?

The president of the House of Deputies is elected by the members of the House of Deputies at each General Convention and is responsible to them. The president also participates in a mutual ministry review every 18 months with members of Executive Council and all of the officers of Executive Council and the DFMS. These lines of responsibility and accountability would not change if the position were to be paid.

Would paying the President of the House of Deputies change her or his relationship to the Presiding Bishop or the House of Bishops?

No. The Presiding Bishop is and will remain the sole primate and chief pastor of The Episcopal Church, president of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, and chair and chief executive officer of the Executive Council. These roles, as well as the roles of other bishops, are clearly defined in the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church. Paying the president of the House of Deputies would not change either the president's responsibilities or the way the president's role complements those of the Presiding Bishop and other bishops.

Why is a salary already in the proposed budget, and how was the amount determined?

The Task Force on Church Leadership and Compensation asked the Joint Standing Committee on Finances for Mission Committee of Executive Council to include compensation for the president of the House of Deputies as a provisional item in the draft budget that was submitted to the Joint Committee on Program Budget and Finance for action at General Convention. The task force did not recommend a specific amount.

In turn, the Joint Standing Committee on Finances for Mission of Executive Council asked Raphaelle Sondak, a member of the Presiding Bishop's staff who serves as the Episcopal Church's director of human resources, to conduct a compensation analysis for the position based on the duties and responsibilities outlined in the church's governing documents and summarized in the Task Force report. That amount was provisionally included in the draft budget for the 2019-2021 triennium. If General Convention does not concur on Resolution A028, or some other resolution to provide compensation for the president, that money will be returned to the budget.

Has General Convention already considered this question?

Yes. General Convention has considered the issue of compensation for the president of the House of Deputies three times; in 1997, 2000 and 2015. In 2015, General Convention passed [Resolution D013](#), which asked the presiding officers to establish a task force that would "consider these issues of leadership and compensation and...report its recommendations to the 79th General Convention." [Resolution A028](#), proposed by this task force, is the result of those deliberations.